

Message Text

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PAGE 01 VIENNA 01046 101625Z

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SUBJ: VISIT BY WEST GERMAN MINISTER FOR ECONOMIC COOPERATION,
EGON BAHR

1. SUMMARY. WEST GERMAN ECONOMIC COOPERATION MINISTER,
EGON BAHR, GAVE A PUBLIC LECTURE IN VIENNA ON THE NORTH/
SOUTH DIALOGUE DURING A TWO-DAY OFFICIAL VISIT TO DISCUSS
DEVELOPMENT ASSISTANCE QUESTIONS WITH GOA OFFICIALS,
INCLUDING CHANCELLOR KREISKY AND STATE SECRETARY, ERNST
VESELSKY. END SUMMARY.

2. BAHR'S FEB 9 LECTURE ON "DETENTE BETWEEN NORTH AND
SOUTH" WAS SPONSORED BY THE VIENNA INSTITUTE FOR DEVELOPMENT
QUESTIONS. HIS MAIN THEMES WERE: (A) MOST CURRENT ECONOMIC
PROBLEMS -- ENERGY, RECESSION, ETC. --- ARE WORLDWIDE IN
SCOPE AND REQUIRE GLOBAL SOLUTIONS; (B) DEVELOPMENT ASSISTANCE
IN AN INTERDEPENDENT WORLD IS NOT SIMPLY CHARITY BUT DEFI-
NITELY IN THE BEST INTERESTS OF THE INDUSTRIALIZED COUNTRIES
THEMSELVES. (HE NOTED IN THIS CONNECTION THE IMPORTANCE
OF ASSISTANCE-RELATED EXPORTS TO THE ECONOMY OF THE FEDERAL

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PAGE 02 VIENNA 01046 101625Z

REPUBLIC.); AND (C) THE LESSONS OF EAST/WEST DETENTE SHOULD BE
USEFUL IN DEVELOPMENT OF A NORTH/SOUTH DETENTE.

3. REGARDING POINT (C), BAHR EXPRESSED VIEW THAT, IF NORTH/SOUTH DIALOGUE IS TO BE SUCCESSFUL, WAYS WILL HAVE TO BE FOUND TO PERMIT COUNTRIES WITH DIFFERING ECONOMIC SYSTEMS TO WORK COOPERATIVELY. AS A FIRST STEP IN THIS DIRECTION, BAHR SUGGESTED APPLICATION OF THE WEST GERMAN PRACTICE OF "KONZERTIERTE AKTION" (CONCERTED ACTION) -- USED IN WEST GERMAN LABOR/MANAGEMENT NEGOTIATIONS -- TO NORTH/SOUTH ISSUES. SUCH A PRACTICE, HE FELT, COULD AT LEAST HELP TO ACHIEVE AGREEMENT ON THE BASIC FACTS OF THE PROBLEMS AT HAND.

4. BAHR EXPRESSED REGRET AT EXCLUSION OF WARSAW PACT COUNTRIES FROM NORTH/SOUTH DIALOGUE, SINCE SOLUTIONS TO GLOBAL ECONOMIC PROBLEMS WOULD HAVE TO INVOLVE THEM AS WELL. IN DISCUSSION WITH BAHR FOLLOWING LECTURE, EMBOFF NOTED THAT PRESENT DIALOGUE WAS NOT AIMED AT PRODUCING DETAILED SOLUTIONS TO CURRENT ECONOMIC PROBLEMS BUT RATHER TO ENERGIZE EXISTING MULTI-LATERAL ORGANIZATIONS TO DEAL WITH THEM MORE CONSTRUCTIVELY. EMBOFF ASKED BAHR IF EXPANSION OF DIALOGUE TO INCLUDE SOCIALIST STATES AT THIS POINT WOULD NOT MERELY INCREASE THE DANGER OF POLEMICAL CONFRONTATION WHICH WE SEEK TO AVOID. BAHR REPLIED THAT HE WAS AWARE OF THIS RISK BUT FELT THAT BRINGING WARSAW PACT COUNTRIES INTO DIALOGUE WOULD FORCE THEM TO CONTRIBUTE MORE -- IN TERMS OF REAL RESOURCES -- TO SOLVING WORLD'S ECONOMIC ILLS.

5. COMMENT. A MAJOR PURPOSE OF BAHR'S VISIT APPEARS TO HAVE BEEN TO MAKE GOA DECISION-MAKERS (A NUMBER OF PARLIAMENTARIANS WERE CONSPICUOUSLY PRESENT AT LECTURE) AWARE OF IMPORTANCE OF NORTH/SOUTH DIALOGUE AND CONTINUED IMPORTANCE OF DEVELOPMENT ASSISTANCE IN GENERAL. ALTHOUGH BAHR SAID THAT HE HAD DISCUSSED POSSIBILITY OF COOPERATIVE WEST GERMAN/AUSTRIAN AID PROJECTS, SOURCES IN CHANCELLOR'S OFFICE TOLD EMBOFF THEY DOUBTED MUCH OF SIGNIFICANCE IN THIS AREA WOULD BE IMPLEMENTED SOON. BUCHANAN

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